Listing of Claim Amendments

1-2. (Cancelled)

3. (New) A method of delivering bone graft paste material to a bone defect area in a patient's body through a minimally invasive portal, comprising:

providing an instrument assembly for delivering the bone graft material to the bone defect area, said instrument assembly comprising:

a bone graft needle for delivery of bone graft material to the bone defect area, said needle comprising an elongate tubular delivery member having a lumen between a proximal end and a distal end, said elongate tubular delivery member having a plurality of ports communicating with said lumen, said ports positioned adjacent to said distal end, and

an elongate penetrating member for receipt within said bone graft needle,

inserting said elongate penetrating member into said lumen of said bone graft needle until a distal end of said elongate penetrating member extends from said distal end of said bone graft needle,

inserting said instrument assembly through the minimally invasive portal until said open distal end of said bone graft needle operatively reaches the bone defect area, while maintaining said proximal end of said bone graft needle external of the patient's body,

removing said elongate penetrating member from said bone graft needle while retaining said distal end of said bone graft needle at the bone defect area,

forming a paste of bone graft material, said bone graft material comprising calcium sulfate, and

using a syringe to inject said paste of bone graft material through said plurality of ports and said distal end of said bone graft needle to thereby deliver said bone graft material to the bone defect area.

4. (New) A method of claim 3, wherein said bone graft material further comprises demineralized bone matrix.

5. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said bone graft needle has four ports.

6. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said ports are equally spaced about a longitudinal axis of said bone graft needle, to thereby provide an even and balanced distribution of bone graft material to the bone defect area.

7. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said ports are variably spaced about a longitudinal axis of said bone graft needle.

8. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein each said port is circular.

9. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein each said port is elongated in a direction substantially parallel to a longitudinal axis of said bone graft needle.

10. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein a distal edge of each said port is positioned at a substantially equal distance from a proximal most edge of said distal end of said bone graft needle.

11. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein said distance is between about 0.020 inch to about 0.275 inch.

12. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein said distance is between about 0.082 inch to about 0.112 inch.

13. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein each said port has a diameter of about 0.063 inch and said distance is between about 0.0505 inch to about 0.0805 inch.

14. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said bone graft needle has an external diameter of about 0.185 inch, said ports have a diameter of about 0.063 inch, said ports are equally spaced about a central longitudinal axis of said bone graft needle, and a center of each said port is located between about 0.082 inch and about 0.112 inch proximally of a proximal most edge of said distal end of said bone graft needle.

15. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said bone graft needle has an external diameter of about 0.115 inch, said ports have a diameter of about 0.047 inch, said ports are equally spaced about a central longitudinal axis of said bone graft needle, and a center of each said port is located between about 0.0882 inch and about 0.112 inch proximally of a proximal most edge of said distal end of said bone graft needle.

16. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said bone graft needle is made of a 304 series stainless steel, is about 4 inches in length, and has a J-type cannulated distal end.

17. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said needle is a 6 cm needle made of a 304 series stainless steel, is about 6 cm in length, and has a J-type cannulated distal end.

18. (New) The method of claim 3, wherein said distal end of said bone graft needle is substantially blocked by abutment with bone or other anatomical tissue, yet plugging or clogging of the bone graft needle is avoided because said bone graft material discharges through said ports.